

## Business

# Family finds success, community at Frederica Academy

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“Thriving” is the word that comes to Joy Mitchell’s mind when she describes her five children’s experience this school year at Frederica Academy.

The Mitchell family moved to the Golden Isles from Atlanta in March 2020, soon after the onset of the pandemic made their life in the city extremely stressful.

“We have five children that were at different schools,” said Joy Mitchell, their mother. “I own a large corporate office furniture dealership in Atlanta, and when quarantine hit they went to virtual schools so we all literally were trying to work and do school, and in Atlanta it was too much.”

Joy, her husband Brett and their children needed a change of pace and scenery. They moved into their island

vacation home, expecting to live there temporarily, but fell in love with the lifestyle here and never moved back.

Instead, their children completed their school year virtually and applied over the summer to attend Frederica Academy, where all five students are able to be enrolled in the same school and benefit from the tight-knit community and academically rigorous and holistic educational programming offered at Frederica Academy, one of Georgia’s premier college preparatory schools.

“We actually had all intentions to go back to Atlanta, and in July my children just looked at me and they were like ‘Mom, this is where we want to be,’” Joy Mitchell said. “There was such a community there, they’d never experienced that anywhere else.”

The Mitchell family

includes Emmy (eleventh grade), OletaKate (ninth grade), Case (sixth grade), IslaMae (fourth grade) and Astin (first grade).

The moment the family walked in Frederica Academy’s door, they received the utmost in care and attention. The school’s staff worked with each child to ensure their transition into a new school was seamless and successful.

“My five kids just aren’t cookie cut, and I try to say this all the time — no child’s story is the same,” Joy Mitchell said.

The staff at Frederica arranged the students’ schedules to accommodate each child’s needs. The children were introduced to “buddies” who helped them during their first days on campus. And Emmy, a junior, has received a tremendous investment of time from the school’s counselor to explore college plans and post-graduation opportunities.

“They’re opening her eyes to so many options that she had never even thought about,” Joy Mitchell said.

Staff at Frederica are helping Emmy take ownership of her college plans while making sure she’s prepared for and open to all options — exploring potential majors and matching those with colleges that offer the best programs, signing up for the SAT/ACT well in advance and understanding what schools options may best fit her desires for the college experience.

“That is the key here — the junior has personal responsibility for setting her plan to be a success where she wants to be,” Joy Mitchell said.

The numerous sports opportunities offered at Frederica was also a huge perk, she said, as well as the other



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The Mitchell family moved to the Golden Isles last year and enrolled their five children in Frederica Academy.

extracurricular programming and individualized attention her children are able to enjoy at the school.

The academic rigor also drew the Mitchell family to Frederica Academy, where Joy said her students are challenged at every grade level.

“They really focus on the whole child — academics are very important,” she said. “The rigor of the academics are very important. But they’re also focusing on the integrity of the child, on building the mind as much as the body. There’s this ho-

listic approach.”

The community, both at Frederica Academy and in the Golden Isles, has welcomed the Mitchell family with open arms and made them feel at home.

“They say it takes a village, right?” Joy Mitchell said. “With five kids, it truly takes a village.”

In no time, Joy Mitchell said, the other parents at Frederica knew her children’s names and made sure they felt welcome.

That support and kindness, along with the premier education her children are

receiving, has made Frederica Academy and the Golden Isles a wonderful new home, Joy Mitchell said.

Her youngest daughter Astin recently woke up ready for “another awesome day on Happy Hall.”

“They genuinely are happy,” Joy Mitchell said. “There’s a peace of just the pace that Frederica offers that they know and that they welcome. Somebody said the other day — ‘I see in your pictures, your kids are just thriving.’ And I think that’s the right word. They’re thriving.”



Provided photo

Joy Mitchell, pictured above with her daughters and husband Brett, says Frederica offers a holistic approach to education.